

QUAKER NEWSLETTER

GAINESVILLE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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⇒ Newsletter submissions are due the Monday before the last Sunday of the month

NEWSLETTER, FIFTH MONTH, 2011

EDUCATION

Query: Do we share our deepest beliefs and values with each other and with our children, while leaving them free to develop as the Spirit may lead them? Does the Meeting give the children loving care, and promote their spiritual life through religious education and other activities? Do we encourage our children's participation in the Meeting's work and cultivate their desire for service to others? How do we educate our members and attenders about the Bible (especially the teachings of Jesus), other spiritual literature, and the history, principles and practices of Friends?

Advice: Seek for ourselves and for our children the full development of God's gifts, which is true education. Realize that education should continue throughout life, and that all should share its opportunities and privileges. Make time for regular personal prayer and worship, and for reading the Bible, Friends' literature, the Faith and Practice, the Queries and Advices, and other sources of spiritual value. Seek truth together in our families and among Friends in shared worship and discussion. Teach by being teachable. Be open to new ideas and approaches. Reach out to that of God in everyone, and endeavor to live out the testimonies of Friends in all the expected and unexpected circumstances of daily life.

Ministry & Nurture

Please Hold in the Light: Tom Clark, Marie and Dave Parsons, Eleanor and Andy Merritt Dick Beardsley happily reports that he is healing well.

If there is anyone who is homebound and would like to have some people come to worship with you in your home or yard or other convenient place, please contact the clerk, or someone close to your heart in the meeting.

On Saturday, May 7 everyone is encouraged to attend the workshop to be held at our meetinghouse entitled **"The Nuts and Bolts of Quakerism."** **Phoebe Andersen** from Tallahassee Monthly Meeting will lead us in worship, presentation, discussion and worship sharing. This all day event will start with beverages, popovers, and jam provided by our Hospitality Committee at 8:15 a.m. Worship will begin at 9. At 9:45 Phoebe will respond to the questions, concerns and comments raised during the January forum when we answered queries to help in the writing of our "Spiritual State of the Meeting" report to Southeastern Yearly Meeting. She will explain "Quaker process," and take questions when she is finished.

Our Hospitality Committee will provide sandwiches and cookies for our lunch break. In the afternoon there will be an opportunity for a more worship centered sharing.

Please feel free to come and go as you need. Child care will be provided. The more people who can take the time to attend all or part of this workshop, the stronger and more responsive to the needs of our attenders our meeting can become. Those of you who are new to Friends and especially those of you who are considering membership, may find this opportunity helpful in understanding who we are, what we do, and how we do it. Please plan to spend some of your time that Saturday at this important workshop.

The Sunday Forum on May 29 will be hosted by the Ministry and Worship Committee. The topic has not yet been selected, but there was an expressed interest in revisiting the booklet, “Answering the Call to Heal the World” by Patience Schemck. **Walter Morris** led a discussion of this booklet in January. The committee is considering other booklets and topics. Input and suggestions before May 10th would be welcome.

Words to Contemplate: “If you would know God, and worship and serve God as you should do, you must come to the means He has ordained and given for that purpose. Some seek it in books, some in learned men, but what they look for is in themselves, yet they overlook it. The voice is too still, the Seed too small, and the Light shineth in darkness . . . a light to you that tells you the truth of your condition, leads all that take heed unto it out of darkness into God’s marvelous light; for light grows upon the obedient.” - *William Penn, 1694*

In Case of Emergency..... The Ministry and Nurture Committee is updating the Emergency Contact Information and Requests to Monthly Meeting about Incapacity or Death (SEYM Dying, Death, and Bereavement) forms for members and regular attenders. We would like to have Emergency Contact Information for everyone. Additionally, if you would like to fill out the SEYM Dying, Death, and Bereavement Form, the meeting will be able to follow through on your requests at the end of your life. The Emergency Contact Form will be kept in a file in the library where it will be readily accessible. The SEYM form will be kept in a sealed envelope and not readily accessible. Both forms will be available in the fellowship room. Please give completed forms to either Sandy Lyon or Connie Ray.



Friendly Reading Group: *Sandy Lyon, Clerk*

The Friendly Reading Group meets on the third Sunday after fellowship from 1-2 PM. On May 15th Don Smith will be leading the discussion on the book *Bladerunner (Do Droids Dream of Electric Sheep?)* by Philip K. Dick. Originally published in 1968, this classic science fiction story is set in 2021. World War Terminus has destroyed much of the planet and species we know now. Some remaining humans have colonized space and others have remained on earth. Androids have been developed to the point where it is difficult to tell what is an android and what is a human. Rogue androids have become a threat to the humans. The book was required reading for any student entering or transferring to Cornell University in 2010. Even if you don't read the book, try to see the movie *Blade Runner* so you can take part in the discussion.



Bill and I have spent the last month traveling with a trip across the bottom tier of states to California and up to Berkeley where we have been since the end of March. We have been enjoying the California poppies that are the state flower of California, and have been walking in gardens and natural areas here since the Quaker woods are not available to us here.

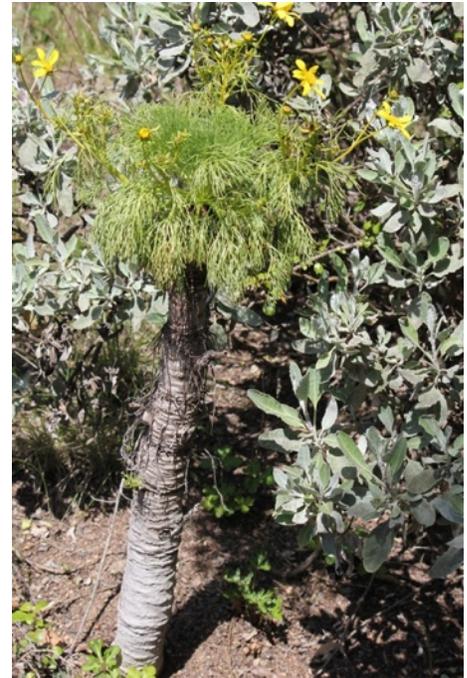
Bill photographed a large California coreopsis in the University of California Botanical Garden at Berkeley native to Santa Rosa Island part of the Channel Islands National Park around 25

miles of the coast of Santa Barbara, California. One can see a certain resemblance to the coreopsis we have growing along the ramp to the main door to the meetinghouse.

We visited the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve south of Santa Cruz, where we saw California blackberries blooming that reminded us of the Southern dewberries that bloom in the Quaker woods, and California coastal live oaks much like our live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*). We saw mustard plants (*Brassica* species) there and heard at a dinner with friends in Berkeley that they were introduced to California by Father Junipero Serra in connection with the establishment of missions in California.

We visited Point Reyes National Seashore, where we saw a fence with two sections separated by around 20 feet by the 1906 earthquake that shook San Francisco. We purchased a book on ecology for gardeners, which is interesting but slow reading. In talking to the volunteer who rang up the sale, I learned that she gave up plans for growing food at her house after having the soil tested and finding out that it had sufficient levels of arsenic to make it unsuitable for growing food. It motivates me to test the soil of the meeting property.

The slope in front of the meeting house now has flowering plants selected by David Pais and installed under his direction. I look forward to seeing them on my return in mid-May and am grateful to all of you who are watering and helping the plants become accustomed to their new homes.



Giant Coreopsis (*Coreopsis gigantea*) at Berkeley Botanical Garden. From Santa Rosa island, near Santa Barbara. About 3 feet high, with stem about 2 inches in diameter.



Berkley Meetinghouse

Yoga: Mondays at 6pm in the meetinghouse.

Film Night: Friday, May 20, 7 pm at the Meeting House. We will show “The Radical,” an intriguing feature film about the anabaptist movement in the 16th century. This was an important, but often neglected part of the Reformation and gave rise directly or indirectly to a number of important religious descendents, including the Mennonites, Bretheren, and Quakers, and Baptists.

Peace & Social Concerns Committee will meet on May 22nd at 9:40am at the Meetinghouse.



PARTY, PARTY, PARTY! There will be a welcoming party for Shawna Doran, who is joining our Meeting with a transfer from St. Petersburg Meeting. It will be a potluck dinner on Friday April 29th at 6 pm at the home of Gary Arthur. Everyone come with celebration in mind! Please notify Gary that you plan to come at 224-5143 or garya365@gmail.com

Locally Grown Foods Dinner on May 14th at 6 PM. Dishes made with locally grown food is the theme for the dinner. The sign-up sheet for food is in the social room. After dinner, we will play board games courtesy of Betty Odum. Also we will have a plant sale with plants such as oak hydrangea, lemon basil, chives, garlic chives, swamp daisies, blueberry. If you have plants to donate, please call Arlene at 386-462-5615.

Go to www.hogtownhomegrown.com where you will find farmers markets locations, foods in season, recipes, information on the May 2011 Eat Local Challenge and more. If enough of us make eating locally grown produce a habit, be it from our farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture, locally owned restaurants or from our own gardens, we will be supporting our local economy and lessening our carbon footprint.

Hospitality Committee Work Days for the year are proposed as April 30th, October 15th, December 10th

Forum: Sunday May 1st at 1 pm at the Meeting House. Eve MacMasters will make a presentation about the work of the Bartram Peace Center (formerly the Interfaith Peace Group). She will also be asking us about ways in which we might cooperate and coordinate our efforts.



Wedding *Elliott Campbell and Smiti Nepal* will be married at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens under the care of Westerly Monthly Meeting (Rhode Island) on May 29th at 6pm. All are welcome!



Wanted: For the wedding we need a light-weight table, bigger than a tray table and smaller than a card table, to hold the certificate while the bridal couple signs it. *Laura and Dick,*

Wedding Committee

QUAKER WEDDINGS AND SPIRITUAL CITIZENSHIP

David Hopkinson-Friends Journal-Aug. 2009

More often than not, the family and friends of the bride and groom are unfamiliar, not just with the traditions of Friends, but also with our distinctive beliefs. It isn't that Friends don't have a liturgy or rituals; it is just that ours tend to be less formal and more subtle than what non-Friends are used to. The structure is far less



apparent. Also, the value we place upon inspiration and spontaneity is unusual, we improvise, and this at times can be risky. You can describe a Quaker wedding, a meeting with attention to marriage, to other people, but they cannot really understand it until they have experienced it. Experience is what Friends are all about and there are limits on the ability of human beings to describe experience. You have to be there, as they say. Having been there, you might agree that there is something wonderful about Quaker weddings.

The number of non-Friends present may actually be larger than the number of meeting attenders and members, which can create a challenge to the latter outnumbered group. There may be a moment of truth in the process. The bride and the groom have made their vows. The parents each stood and spoke. Some Friends, in turn, have spoken. Out of the extended silence which follows, it slowly becomes clear to the friends (who are not Friends) that it is their turn, and if they do not speak now, the opportunity will pass and be gone forever. "Hearts are witnesses" is the ancient proverb. Often it is the longtime friend of either the bride or groom who rises to the occasion, sometimes with humor, sometimes with tears. And the message is usually heartfelt, perhaps what has never been said quite so explicitly; that is what you mean to me. As other non-Friends catch on, seizing the opportunity to speak, the emotional release becomes an avalanche, the mood one of exhilaration. This is the Miracle of the wedding; without realizing it, all of the non-Friends become Quakers, if only for the time being. The meeting becomes a *covered* meeting (which one rarely experiences otherwise) in which all of that affectionate attention, all of that love, is given in a focus upon the couple who are basking in its glory. It is, after all, not every day that all the people who are important to you, gather in one place and make a concerted effort to tell you how much they love you, and why.

The other wonderful thing about Quaker weddings is the participation of the children. Ironically, the kids of the meeting are old hands at the way of Friends, and have a better idea of what is going on and discover there is no barrier to their participation. The culmination of the wedding is signing the wedding certificate. With them it may take some time to do this as they carefully touch the line, or are held up to reach it to make their marks. What a wonderful gift to the bride and groom! For any child of a Quaker meeting, spiritual citizenship begins as soon as they are able to sign their name to a wedding certificate with the implicate message that their participation is as portentous as that of the adults. Weddings are good for them, as they are to us.

Fifth Month 2011 GFM CALENDAR

Worship 11am First Day (Sunday)

Unless noted, meetings are at the Meetinghouse

4/29/11	Fri	6pm	Welcoming Party for Shawna Doran
4/30/11	Sat	9am	Meeting Workday
5/1/11	Sun	9:30am	Library & Building/Grounds/Landscaping Committees
		1pm	Forum: Beltram Peace Center with Eve MacMasters
5/2/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
5/3/11	Tues	11:30am	Friendly Lunch at Books Inc.
5/7/11	Sat	9am-4pm	All Day Meeting Retreat w/ Phoebe Andersen
5/8/11	Sun	9:30am	Hospitality Committee
5/8/11		1pm	Meeting for Business
5/9/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
5/14/11	Sat		Quaker Local Foods Dinner
5/15/11	Sun	9:30am	Singing
		12:30pm	Potluck
		1pm	Friendly Reading Group: Do Droids Dream of Electric Sheep?
5/16/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
5/20/11	Fri	7pm	Film Night: The Radical
5/22/11	Sun	9:40am	Peace & Social Concerns Committee
		12:30pm	Bible Study
5/29/11	Sun	1pm	Forum: Ministry & Nurture
		6pm	Wedding at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens
5/30/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
6/5/11	Sun	9:30am	Library & Building/Grounds/Landscaping Committees
6/6/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
6/7/11	Tues	11:30am	Friendly Lunch at Books Inc.

